

Visiting a Patient: Hours and Guidelines

Visitation Guidelines Effective 1/11/2022

Due to the rise in the COVID-19 positivity rate in our communities, the Wilmington VA Medical Center (WVAMC) has returned to more restrictive visitation at its facilities to protect the health and safety of our Veterans and staff.

Effective **Friday January 14, 2022, at 12:01 a.m.**, the following guidelines for visitors of hospitalized patients at WVAMC are outlined below:

- Individuals coming to the emergency department may have one support person accompany them, who must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms.
- Patients with intellectual or developmental disabilities, as defined by the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH), including chronic cognitive impairment such as dementia, may be accompanied by one support person. This includes patients presenting with an acute problem such as a stroke that is expected to require a support person/caretaker upon discharge.
- Up to two visitors total are allowed for patients in hospice who are at end of life. The two visitors may visit at the same time. The two visitors may switch with other family members as necessary at the discretion of the unit manager or charge nurse.
- Patients having outpatient surgery may have one support person accompany them.
- Patients presenting to outpatient practices and ambulatory services may have one support person if the patient has disabilities requiring assistance for their visit. The support person accompanying must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms but is not required to show proof of vaccination or a recent test.
- Unless otherwise specified above, alternating support persons throughout the day is not allowed. The visitor must be the same person for the entire day and must be 18 years of age or older.

General Visitor Requirements:

- All support persons/visitors are screened for COVID-19 symptoms and will not be permitted entry if they fail the screening procedure.
- For outpatient visits, parents should make every attempt to find childcare to avoid bringing anyone younger than 17 into the facility. If childcare is not available, bringing such children to a visit must be approved in advance.

- If a support person/visitor is allowed per policy, the unit/department staff shall provide instruction, before they enter the patients' rooms, regarding hospital policies to prevent spread of COVID-19, as well as any other pathogens for which transmission-based precautions may be required.
- Visitors may not stay overnight.

Acute Care Unit Visitor Guidelines (ICU, 4 East):

- May have up to one visitor per patient.
- Length of visit may not exceed 30 minutes per visitor per day.
- Visiting hours are between the hours of 11am and 8pm.

4 West Visitor Guidelines:

- NO visitors allowed on the unit, except in end-of-life circumstances.

Community Living Center Visitor Guidelines:

- Following National CLC guidelines, currently in Phase 1: no visitors on the unit. Only scheduled virtual visits or visits through glass partitions are permitted.

All support persons/visitors/companions must:

- Follow masking guidelines, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette precautions while in the common areas of the facility.
- Bring cloth or other masks from home if possible. If not masked upon arrival, a mask will be provided. Loose-fitting cloth masks, bandanas, gaiters, and cloth masks with valves are not permitted. Masks that are provided should be re-used until damaged or soiled, or no longer able to be breathed through.
- Respect social distancing of at least six feet as much as possible, including in the patient's room.
- Perform hand hygiene frequently with soap/water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and limit surfaces touched.
- Remain in the patient's room except for entry to/exit from the hospital/facility to the extent possible. Visitors should limit their movement within the facility and if required to wait in the lobby, should remain masked and physically distant from others.
- All support persons/visitors/companions must remain masked for the duration of their visit, even if they are vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test. This includes remaining masked while in the patient's

room. When possible, the patient should also be masked when visitors are present.

- Visitation privileges may be discontinued at any time based on the clinical situation of the patient, visitor noncompliance with recommended procedures, or other factors.

Thank you for being a partner in your care. If you have questions, please speak with your nurse or a member of our care team.